

APWA Head Says Quality And Value Are Key Benefits Of QBS

Editor's Note: The following article was written by Bob Freudenthal, president of the American Public Works Association (APWA). For more than a decade APWA has partnered with ACEC on the advancement of key infrastructure legislation and business practices.

Those of us involved in building and maintaining public works infrastructure understand how important it is to ensure quality and value for every project. That is our commitment and indeed our responsibility as members of a profession dedicated to providing the infrastructure and services on which all of our communities depend for their quality of life.



Bob Freudenthal,
APWA President

The American Public Works Association (APWA) is a unique organization, a mix of 27,000 public and private sector members working in concert to educate, advocate and provide information to the public on the critical role we all play in assuring a robust infrastructure and support for economic growth.

APWA has long supported quality in all public agency activities with a focus on economy, safety, efficiency, sound construction, serviceability, maintenance and operations. Along with the members of ACEC, we have long encouraged and supported the role of Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) and believe that the public interest is best served when governmental agencies select engineers, architects and related professional services and technical consultants for projects and studies through QBS. It fosters greater creativity and flexibility and minimizes the potential for disputes.

Since passage of the Brooks Act in 1972, federal agencies, most states and many local communities use QBS procedures. The QBS process recognizes that engineering and design professionals play a critical role in the building of our public infrastructure. And those who use QBS understand that a significant advantage derives from its facilitation of client and consultant collaboration, which maximizes quality, value, cost-effectiveness and usefulness. It is in the best interest of taxpayers to have the most qualified firms selected to do the work.

We know that through the QBS process public agencies can be confident of consistently achieving optimum costs for studies, planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance of publicly funded projects. Because it supports creativity, alternative options, innovation and value, QBS is key to achieving smooth joint efforts by agencies and firms toward the common goal of a successful project.

In addition to our common support and encouragement of QBS, ACEC and APWA are working together on many other shared issues through a formal partnership dating back to 1993. Our two organizations jointly support increased investment in our nation's infrastructure at the federal, state and local levels of government and are working to educate lawmakers and the public about the need to close a widening infrastructure investment gap. Support for passage of the recently enacted, and long overdue surface transportation law, SAFETEA-LU, was also an important objective for all of us.

A well-maintained, adequately funded public infrastructure is one of our nation's most important assets. We look forward to continuing and strengthening our cooperative work in support of QBS and all our common goals.

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